WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

Since the carriage-way of this bridge was closed, the workmen have been engaged in removing the great body of loose sand and rubble walls which loaded the east pier of the centre arch unnecessarily, and are preparing to substitute brick arches, &c. for this, as was done to the sunken pier on the Middlesex side. Mr. Nixon, the superintendent of the works informs us, that the lessening of the weight upon each pier by this operation, and by the proposed lowering of the roadway, will not be less than 1,700 tons, and that since this lightening began there has not been the smallest movement in any part; whether, however, this will continue so, time only can prove.

Messrs. Walker and Burgess have thought it prudent to take the opinion of two other eminent engineers, Messrs. Cubitt and Rendell; we understand their opinion also to be that the sinking of the piers of the bridge is caused by the great load upon the clay foundation, their being no piles under the bridge, and the ground on the Surrey side being of a loose nature. Supposing this to be correct, to lessen the load appears the direct remedy. The masonry of three of the arches being laid bare gives an opportunity for taking out any sunken stones, and stopping the cracks from the upper side, and is now in progress.

Many of our readers may not be aware, that when this bridge was commenced, the intention was to have wooden arches, and that the thickness of the piers was enlarged for carrying stone arches without adding to the foundation. Hence perhaps their general weakness. It appears from the plans which we have seen, that there is a thickness, varying from 2 feet to 7 feet, of sand and gravel between the bottom of the caissons and the clay.

Westminster Bridge is 100 years old. Blackfriars bridge was built by Mr. Mylne in caissons about 77 years since, but there are piles under them. Vauxhall-bridge was built in 1816, by Mr. Walker, in caissons, which go down to and rest upon the clay.—*Times.*

STOKE ROCHFORD.—A truly hospitable entertainment was given here on Tuesday last, by Christopher Turnor, Esq., M.P., to the contractors and workmen employed at the splendid new mansion which he is erecting from designs by the celebrated, architect, Wm. Burn, Esq., of Edinburgh. About 120 sat down to dinner, which was served up in the new hall. Mr. Laing, clerk of the works, presided; and there were also present, Mr. Hornsby, Mr. J. Wilson, Mr. N. Rogers, Mr. Howison, and Mr. Clayton, from Grantham; Mr. Howison, of Harlaxton; and Mr. Scoffin and Mr. Watson, of Stoke. Mr. Alex. Wilson, builder, was vice-president. After full justice had been done to the roast beef and plum pudding, and to the usual loyal toasts, the chairman gave the health of Christopher Turnor, Esq., expressing how greatly they all appreciated his uniform kindness and liberality. The toast was drank with the utmost enthusiasm. At this period Mr. Turnor honoured the company with his presence, and after the cheers with which he was greeted had subsided, he proposed in very complimentary terms the health of the chairman with three times three. Mr. Laing having expressed his sense of the honour done him, Mr. Turnor gave the health of Mr. Alex. Wilson and the other contractors, adding that he was very much pleased with the skilful and substantial manner in which they had executed the building, and that the workmen, although numbering nearly 200 through the season, had conducted themselves to his entire satisfaction. Mr. Wilson replied that it was his wish, along with his fellow contractors, to do every justice to the building, and to please their employer and all concerned. Mr. Turnor then retired, amidst deafening cheers. Mr. Wilson, of Grantham, gave the health of Lady Caroline Turnor, whose amiable qualities, he said, did honour to her exalted station. This was drank with three times three, and was followed by several other toasts, including the health of Wm. Burn, Esq., the architect. The evening was spent in the happiest manner, all feeling delighted with Mr. Turnor's kindness and the handsome way in which they had been treated. The party broke up soon after twelve o'clock.

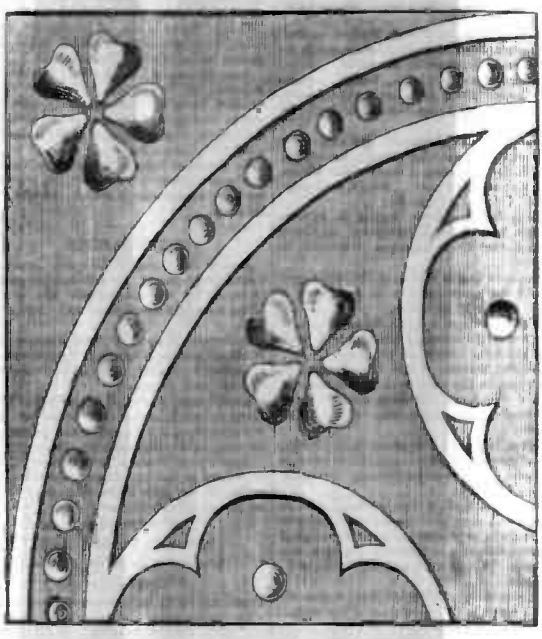
The number of houses in France, in 1810, was 2,498,137; in 1825, 2,423,702; and in 1840, 2,318,495. Thus, whilst the population has nearly doubled, the number of houses remains about the same.

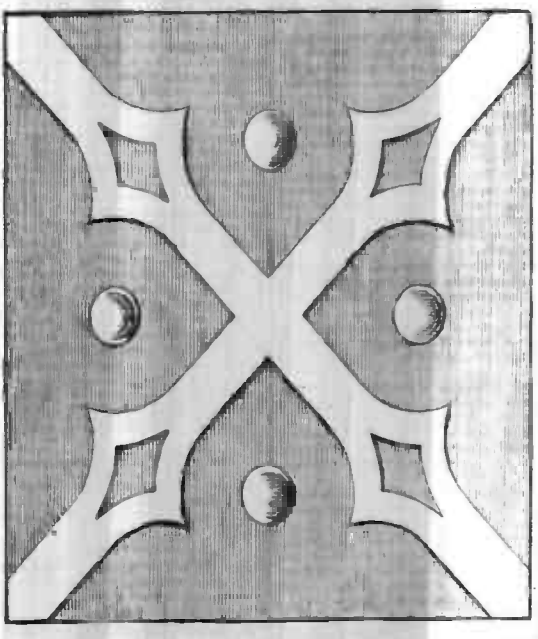
Mr. Josiah Parkes has been appointed consulting engineer of the Royal Agricultural Society of England.

ENCAUSTIC TILES.

SIR,—If the following sketches are of any service to your periodical, they are at your service. They are copies of two very ancient encaustic tiles found during the alterations of All Saints Church, in this city, under Mr. H. Rumley, architect; they are in a very mutilated state, so that I was forced to rub them with a stone in water before I could copy them; they appear to have been glazed all over, top and bottom. Encaustic tiles are now coming much in use for paving of ecclesiastic buildings.

T. M. V.





HUNTINGDON—VALUE OF LAND.—On Saturday evening, the 4th inst., a piece of pasture land, containing about two acres and a quarter, adjoining the River Ouse, and having a carriage communication with the street at Huntingdon, was put up to auction by Mr. Fox, at the George Hotel. The first bidding was 500*l*., and after a spirited competition, it was knocked down at 1,018*l*. The convenience of the spot for a merchant's yard rendered it highly valuable, and induced the competition; but it was bought by a lady whose property adjoins, and will remain free from bricks and mortar.

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